

Current Claims Schedule

- 1  
2 1. (Currently Amended) A sterilization tray assembly for medical instruments, said as-  
3 sembly comprising:  
4                   a unitary molded plastic base including  
5                   a plurality of individual thin-walled tubes defining first passages,  
6 each first passage having open upper and lower ends,  
7                   a first web having a periphery and connecting and supporting said  
8 tubes in parallel spaced-apart relation so that ~~a fluid~~ open spaces exist between the tubes  
9 in which hot sterilant can circulate around and between said tubes from said first web to  
10 the lower ends of the first passages; .  
11                   instrument supports at the lower ends of the ~~plurality of tubes~~ first  
12 passages for supporting medical instruments placed in said first passages while allowing  
13 ~~a fluid~~ the sterilant to circulate through said first passages; and  
14                   a unitary molded plastic cover for seating on said base so as to  
15 cover said instruments.
- 1 2. (Previously Presented) The assembly defined in claim 1 wherein the upper ends of the  
2 first passages are flared.
- 1 3. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 1 wherein said base and said cover include  
2 interfitting latching surfaces which, when the cover is seated on the base, releasably se-  
3 cure the cover to the base.
- 1 4. (Previously Presented) The assembly defined in claim 1  
2                   wherein said first web constitutes a top wall of the base, and  
3                   further including a peripheral web extending down from said first web and spaced  
4 around said plurality of tubes, said peripheral web constituting a side wall of the base as  
5 well as defining a seating surface for the cover.

1 5. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 1 wherein said first web comprises a top web  
2 which extends between the upper ends of the tubes and constitutes a top wall of the base.

1 6. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 5 and further including one or more recepta-  
2 cles in said tray wall.

1 7. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 5 and further including graphics formed on  
2 said top wall and indicating the contents of said first passages.

1 8. (Currently Amended) The assembly defined in claim 1 wherein the instrument sup-  
2 ports comprise bridges at the lower ends of the ~~tubes~~first passages which partially oc-  
3 clude the lower ends of the first passages.

1 9. (Currently Amended) The assembly defined in claim 1 wherein the instrument sup-  
2 ports comprise interior flanges at the lower ends of said plurality of ~~tubes~~first passages.

1 10. (Currently Amended) The assembly defined in claim 1 wherein said cover includes  
2 a plurality of individual thin-walled sleeves defining second passages,  
3 each second passage having open upper and lower ends, said lower ends having substan-  
4 tially the same cross-sections as the upper ends of said first passages, and  
5 a second web having a periphery and connecting and supporting the  
6 sleeves in parallel spaced-apart relation so that when the cover is seated on said base, the  
7 corresponding first and second passages are co-linear and continuous so as to isolate any  
8 instrument therein ~~from~~from those in adjacent passages.

1 11.(Original) The assembly defined in claim 10 wherein the second passages are longer  
2 than the first passages.

1 12. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 10 wherein the upper ends of the second  
2 passages are smaller than the lower ends of the second passages.

1 13. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 12 wherein the cross-sections of the second  
2 passages are larger than those of the first passages

1 14. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 10 and further including  
2 first keying surfaces distributed around the periphery of the first web, and  
3 second keying surfaces distributed around the periphery of the second web, said  
4 first and second keying surfaces being shaped and arranged to key together as the  
5 cover is seated on the base to bring said first and second passages into axial alignment.

1 15. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 14 wherein  
2 the first web comprises the top wall of the base and the base also includes a side  
3 wall extending down from the top wall of the base,  
4 the second web comprises the top wall of the cover and the cover also includes a  
5 side wall extending down from the top wall of the cover,  
6 the first keying surfaces comprise exterior keyways in the side wall of the base  
7 which extend parallel to said tubes, and  
8 the second keying surfaces comprise interior keys in the side wall of the cover  
9 which extend parallel to said sleeves, said keys being arranged to key into said keyways  
10 as the cover is seated on the base.

1 16. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 15 wherein the keys have projections ex-  
2 tending below the bottom of the cover side wall so that said projections can be engaged in  
3 the keyways while the side wall of the cover is still spaced above the top wall of the base.

1 17. (Currently Amended) The assembly defined in claim 10 wherein the side wall of the  
2 base has a lower edge that defines a plane which is spaced below the lower ends of said  
3 ~~tubes~~first passages.

1 18. (Currently Amended) A sterilization tray assembly for medical instruments, said as-  
2 ssembly comprising:

3 a molded plastic base including a top wall, a plurality of individual thin-walled  
4 tubes extending down from said top wall in parallel spaced-apart relation so that open  
5 spaces exist between said tubes in which hot sterilant can circulate between the tubes,  
6 said tubes defining first passages, each first passage having an open upper end at said top  
7 wall and a lower end, instrument supports at the lower ends of the plurality of ~~tubes~~ first  
8 passages for supporting medical instruments placed in said first passages while allowing  
9 a fluid to circulate through said first passages and a peripheral wall extending down from  
10 said top wall said peripheral wall, being spaced from and surrounding said tubes, and

11 a molded plastic cover for seating on the base so as to cover said instruments, said  
12 cover including a top wall, a plurality of individual sleeves extending down from said top  
13 wall of the cover in parallel spaced-apart relation, said sleeves defining second passages,  
14 each second passages having open upper and lower ends, said lower ends having substan-  
15 tially the same cross-sections as the upper ends of said first passages and a peripheral  
16 wall extending down from the top wall of the cover so as to surround said sleeves  
17 whereby when the cover is seated on the base, the corresponding first and second pas-  
18 sages are co-linear and continuous and the peripheral wall of the cover overlaps the pe-  
19 ripheral wall of the base.

1 19. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 18 and further including

2 first keying surfaces distributed around the peripheral wall of the base, and  
3 second keying surfaces distributed around the peripheral wall of the cover, said  
4 first and second keying surfaces being shaped and arranged to key together as the cover is  
5 seated on the base.

1 20. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 19 wherein the first keying surfaces com-  
2 prise exterior keyways extending perpendicular to the top wall of the base, and

3 the second keying surfaces comprise interior keys extending perpendicular to the  
4 top wall of the cover.

- 1 21. (Original) The assembly defined in claim 20 wherein said keys have projections
- 2 which extend below the peripheral wall of the cover so that said projections can be en-
- 3 gaged in said keyways while the peripheral wall of the cover is still spaced above the top
- 4 wall of the base.